



# THE BAPTIST RECORD.

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## Honesty—Paying Debts.

A debt is what one voluntarily promises to pay, or what in justice he ought to pay. It is generally for value received; but may not be. It may be simply what we have promised to pay. Thus, a note given to any institution for its support becomes the expression of debt. By it we obligate ourselves to pay so much.

In nothing does the demoralizing effects of the war show themselves more than in the laxity seen on all sides as to the payment of debts. We suppose that the last fifteen years have been without a parallel in the history of the country in the shirking of just obligations. It is beyond question that men no longer feel that their standing in society we give to say in the church to be on strict integrity. There is a lamentable low standard among us to-day.

All over the country there are men who have become involved, and rather than sell their property to pay their just debts, they have made over to their wives, or other kin, and live upon it in defiance of their creditors. Others have taken the benefit of the bankrupt law and live in fine houses with all the surroundings of wealth. One who looks at matters in a plain, straightforward way cannot believe anything but that perjury has come in to help dishonesty in avoiding the payment of honest debts. The appearances are all this way, and the unwelcome conviction has been forced upon us that many fine gentlemen were too weak to become poor for the sake of being honest to the last. Even preachers have not, in every case avoided this transparent fraud. We appeal to our readers to say, if among all professing Christians in this country there are not many whom a sober judgment cannot accept. It is useless to say that people who avail themselves of legal protection against their creditors and thus avoid paying their just debts have no claim to honesty.

It is useless to dwell on the many quirks and turns by which men have avoided the payment of their obligations. They are numerous. But there is one class which we must not pass, those easy persons who do not bankrupt, do not deny their debts, but who do not pay them. Bland, quiet, orderly people they are; yet they constantly buy more than they pay for. They do not exert themselves to meet their obligations, and no not seem to feel bound to do so.

We are fully convinced that there are many honest people in debt. They have been disappointed in their expectations. Some people have very poor judgment. They expect great things of the future, and do not allow sufficiently for the constant drain on their resources. Hence they go over their income and, contrary to their expectations, find themselves behind. Their reasonable expectations are sometimes disappointed by the seasons, or in other ways. Since the war the whole country has been sinking, till within the last year or two, when there has been a rise. This has kept our people generally in debt.

To the debtor class we wish to address a few kind earnest words. Pay your debts. Do not allow yourself to think of anything else. It is an awful thing for any one to let go an honest life to determine to defend his fellow man. Pay your debts for the sake of your creditor. But most of all pay your debts for your own sake. Only think how you would weaken your own character by being dishonest. If you let go an honest life, you can never be a noble man again. You sink at once in the scale of moral being. You degrade yourself as all the world cannot degrade you. Character is too valuable to barter for money.

But you may say how can I pay my debts and live? We cannot tell you perhaps how you can do that. But let me make a few suggestions. Look around and see if you cannot live on less. The necessities of life are not many nor costly. It does not cost much to live, if we are determined to live close. Dispense with all the superfluities of life. Dress plainly and have your family do so. Talk the matter over with them, and ask their co-operation. Keep back nothing, tell your true condition, explain the importance of your doing right. Ask each one to help you rise from the deadwood. They will almost certainly co-operate.

ate heartily. If they do not, then be a man and have your way, because it is the right way. All will see the good of it in the end.

Next—industry. Do everything you can to increase your income.

Lastly, have an understanding with your creditors. Keep nothing from them. Tell them your plans and purposes. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, they will be your best friends, and will give you every help. A true man rarely ever wants friends.

And most of all we believe God will be the efficient helper of the true man who sets his heart to keep the statute. "Provide things honest in the sight of all men."

## The Matchless Evil.

Here we relate another occurrence which I was an eye witness and in part an actor. Many years ago I lived in a good neighborhood, peace and order prevailed; a large church had been gathered in, its entire friendship reigned throughout its bounds, and fellowship among the members of the church. Thus it was until two men undertook to obtain license to tell spirits near the place where we met for worship. Influenced alone by conviction of duty to God, the church, my neighbors, and my own children, I opposed it. Asked by my brethren, and other friends, we were successful, and were rewarded for our labor by being spared twelve months longer the dire effects of a grogery. But alas for us, the second effort of our enemy triumphed. Immediately the work of demoralization began and before the year for which the license was granted was ended, besides many petty disturbances, on one occasion there was a general whisky row in which a neighbor was cut almost literally in pieces, and for months lay, to all human appearances, poised between life and death. His family too, were dependent upon his daily labor for their support. Indeed, so shocking were the consequences of this drab-shop that the keepers themselves became alarmed and abandoned the business. Who was responsible? The men who kept the grocery, say you? True, but were not those responsible, too, who by doing their duty might have so easily prevented it?—W. M. Thigpen, vs. S. B.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Schools are generally opening well.

Carry up Record money to the Association with you.

"We only need leaders."—Layman. That is the truth!

The Purser brothers commenced a meeting at Aberdeen last Sunday.

Go over this week to take charge of the churches at Sardis and Batesville.—J. T. Christian.

We can recommend a first-class pastor to church wanting such a man.

The Messenger is doing well, all things considered.—S. C. Lee. We are glad of it.

I don't believe we have any right to claim a support while we are secularized.—A. Scarborough.

It is no harder to pay a big debt than a little one if you have the money.—R. D. Middleton.

I want my children educated, that they may the more glorify God, and help the world.—T. J. Walne.

We had a glorious time at the Pearl River Association.—T. J. Walne. You seem to be warmed up.

The Strong River Association stands second in the list of Associations in its contributions to State Missions.

There is evidently an increase in the missionary spirit in the Strong River Association.—T. J. Walne.

The education at Mississippi College is well suited to business men, and not to preachers, simply.—R. A. Coker.

It was our pleasure to attend the meeting of this body, Sunday and Monday last. We had never had the pleasure of seeing this fine body of Baptists before. In company with Secretary Walne, we drove up behind brother Lomax's buggy horse, which is a mule, about eleven o'clock, and found the hill covered with the Association.

There is emotion in our religion; there is principle too; the emotion rises out of the principle.—R. H. Purser.

There are between seventy and eighty students at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. A

We had a good meeting at Somonovia church, continuing five days; baptized seven—one awaits baptism.—J. E. Steinwender.

I am well and doing well Irockon, Miss. Glad to hear it. Are you chaff to the wheat?

To the church at Terry: Please have the baptistry filled and everything in order for baptizing on the fourth Sunday. The Lord willing we will preach on baptism at eleven o'clock on the day above mentioned. Let prayer be offered for the divine presence during our services. We would be glad to see a full turn out Saturday.

May the day soon come when every saloon door will be closed and all our churches will be pure.—E. D. A. Goodwin, colored. That is what one of the best colored preachers in the State says. Bro. G. let's all, white and black, unite to close these doors.

A brother from Tennessee writes that the Baptist has not put us in a fair light, but he begs us not to write a single severe sentence.

The weather getting cooler, and we hope to get through pretty well; but we can't say how we will feel if The Baptist does not set us right.

A prominent brother from a State west of this says, "I am surprised that you bear the misrepresentations of The Baptist so long and patiently." We are going to give The Baptist ample time to make it right, but if it is not done, as we suppose it will be, then—well, we will see about it.

A brother suggests that those who are trying to get away from the spirit of education and missions would better go into a hole and pull the hole in after them. He

"don't think our papers ought to be monopolized by your smart men." Most any one who will not try to be smart can write a goods news letter.

There are forty ministers in the State who can rival your Parish or Molvin.—T. E. Tate. Well then these forty would give the paper about four thousand subscriptions

leaving six thousand for the other seven hundred preachers. That really looks like ten thousand might be had.

Peace and union in the Baptist family are far more profitable in the Baptist family than controversy.—J. E. Steinwender. We are of that opinion.

The Southern Baptist expresses itself as being in hearty sympathy with Bro. Walne's work. "The world do move," and we are glad it does.

Two young men say they are engaged to be married to one lady. The common mind would think this rather unfortunate; but of course the meaning is each one to a lady, and further some one announces in a house in New Orleans, and months after he saw the other in a house in New York. Of course that would be plain, albeit we suspect the man would go up for jewelry.

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